# The „All American"

# ★★ PARAGLIDE

NIJMEGEN, NETHERLANDS
TUESDAY, OCT. 17 1944

AMERIKA — HOLLAND

SOUVENIR BROCHURE NEDERLAND

PRINTED BY: DE GELDERLANDER-PRESS, NIJMEGEN - HOLLAND


AIRBORNE

## INVADES HOLLAND!

### 17 SEPTEMBER

By Vernon L. Havener.

**With „All-American" Airborne Division in Holland.** Paratroopers and glidermen of the 82nd Airborne Division — battle-seasoned veterans of Sicily, Italy and Normandy — dropped out of the peaceful Sunday afternoon skies over Holland September 17 to liberate the key Nijmegen sector and pave the way for the sweep of powerful British units northward from Belgium through Holland to the threshold of Germany itself.

The landings — intricately co-ordinated with those of other American, British and Polish units — were a part of the greatest airborne operation in history, and were on an incomparably larger scale than any other all-daylight airborne invasion ever attempted.

Wave upon wave of 82nd Division sky troops from English airfields passed over the North Sea and the flooded lowlands of western Holland and dropped on the Nijmegen sector.

Brigadier General James M. Gavin, commander of the 82nd, was the first to jump in his serial.

The 82nd troops quickly swept aside German ground opposition, had accomplished a substantial portion of their mission and entered the outskirts of Nijmegen by dusk.

Landing of the airborne troops was the signal for the uprising of Dutch partisan forces—including an organised underground army 400 strong. The partisans were credited by General Gavin with giving „extremely valuable" assistance to the Allies. They played a vital role in preventing the Germans from blowing the Nijmegen bridges and gave the Allies much valuable information.

The paratroopers fought for nearly 48 hours without contact with ground forces against hastily - committed German troops who put up a stiff fight as the campaign progressed. The Americans linked with leading elements of the advancing British Second Army on D Plus Two.

Additional glider landings in force were made on D Plus Six, when the 325th Glider Infantry, which had been held up by bad weather, landed with re-enforcing troops, anti-tank guns, jeeps, medical and other supplies.

Supplies for the airborne troops were dropped by parachute, and flown in by transports and bombers until contact was made with British forces.

Despite growing enemy aggressiveness after the initial landings, the division accomplished its mission completely. With supporting British armor, the division seized and held the vital highway and railway bridges over the Waal River (a continuation of the Rhine) in Nijmegen, thus holding open a communications corridor to the north and enabling British units to relieve beleaguered British airborne troops who dropped in the Arnhem area.

The division took strategic commanding ground south of Nijmegen and played an important part in the final freeing of the city after fierce fighting in the river area. The division took the Grave bridge over the Maas River and two bridges over the Maas-Waal Canal south and southwest of Nijmegen and freed several villages.

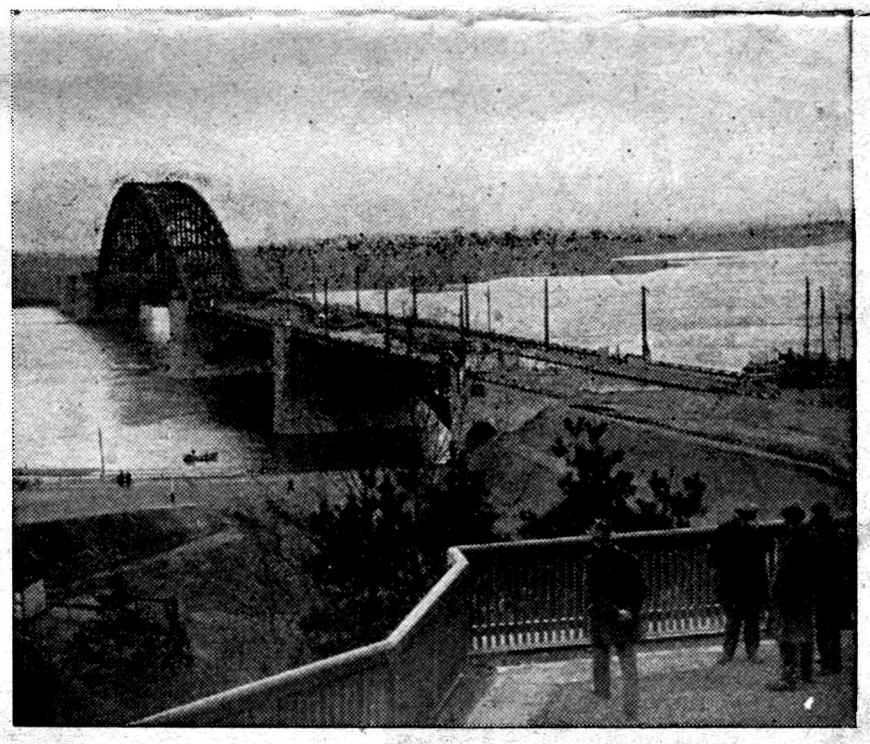
Elements of the division penetrated into and held a portion of Germany northwest of Wyler.

Despite several severe German counter-attacks on narrow fronts, the division never relinquished any ground which it covered in force. It inflicted severe casualties on the Nazis and took many (2889 as of 5 October) prisoners.

## Orange Above

Dutch Patriots give brochure to „All American" Liberators. This paper is made available to troops of the 82nd „All American" Airborne Division and their families through the generosity of the citizens in Nijmegen, Netherlands. As far as we know it's the only paper of its kind in Holland. We express our gratitude and thanks to the Dutch people whose assistance in this campaign has been immeasurable.

The 82nd Div.



The famous Nijmegen Bridge, one of the main objectives of the Dutch Invasion (Photo, 1936).

## 82ND CAPTURES VITAL NIJMEGEN BRIDGE IN HISTORIC 3 DAY BATTLE

### 504 MAKES HISTORIC RIVER CROSSING

By David H. Whittier.

The 504th Parachute Infantry dropped near Grave early on the afternoon of September 17 after encountering only light flak during its flight over enemy-occupied territory.

The paratroopers, battle-wise from an airborne invasion of Sicily and hard ground fighting near Anzio in Italy, organized speedily, and had accomplished almost their entire mission before dusk of the first day.

Principal objective of the unit was the Grave road bridge over the Maas River, which was taken after a sharp fire fight lasting several hours.

The parachute regiment also captured a strategically-important bridge over the Maas-Waal Canal and seized commanding ground overlooking another Maas-Waal bridge which the Germans had destroyed.

Like other airborne elements, the 504th was re-upplied by air during the early phases of the campaign. The unit made contact with the advance elements of strong British forces on September 19.

With the 307th Engineers, the 504th played a vital role in seizing and holding the railway and highway bridges over the Waal River in Nijmegen.

Under the supporting muzzles of British tanks, the 504th crossed the river downstream from the railroad bridge under heavy fire and knocked out stubborn German defenses on the north bank and on the bridges. The engineers, carrying on heroically in the face of withering fire, moved wave after wave of paratroopers across the river in canvas assault boats.

Once across the river, the troopers flanked the Nijmegen bridges and assaulted and took medieval Fort Lent. Three hours later, members of the 504th were fighting 1000 yards north of the river. Hundreds of prisoners had been taken and hundreds more Germans had been killed. Two hundred and sixty-seven German dead were counted on the railway bridge alone. Capture of the bridges permitted British units to pass northward to relieve hard-pressed British airborne forces near Arnhem.

Since these assaults, the 504th has held a wide front against frequent vigorous German counter-attacks and conducted numerous strong combat-reconnaissance patrols.

### 505 CRACKS THROUGH NIJMEGEN TO REACH NEAR SIDE

By Robert M. Piper.

On 17 September 1944, the 505th Parachute Infantry jumped in the initial attacking force into German occupied Holland. The unit then stormed the town of Groesbeek and aided in seizing the important crossings of the Maas-Waal Canal. Upon completion of their initial missions two battalions of the Regiment organized the south-eastern defense of the Airborne Sector, which was some 11,000 yards in length.

The reserve battalion of this Regiment moved North with British Armored forces toward the important Nijmegen Bridge, focal point of all roads leading north into Germany. This battalion, the only infantry unit with this armored column, smashed its way into the city of Nijmegen in bitter house to house and hand to hand combat. It drove a numerically superior German force out of pill-boxes, fox-holes and prepared trenches. They sought out snipers in houses and soldiers hiding in cellers, clearing the town as they moved on despite the fact they were constantly under heavy artillery fire. This force seized and held the south end of the railroad bridge and the all-important Nijmegen road bridge.

German armor and infantry forces attempting to break through the southern defenses, launched fierce attacks at both Reithorst and Mook, Holland. In bitter hand-to-hand fighting, and with bullets, and cold steel, these combat-seasoned men drove the enemy force back, capturing many and leaving the town strewn with burned vehicles and dead Germans. A captured German parachute officer said, „That is the worst hell I've ever been in." On other parts of this broad front the enemy attempted to seek out front lines in search of a weak sector through which he could attack. He shelled the defenses day and night, attempting to discourage and weaken our forces, but the defenses were held intact, screening the Allied move north.

The Regiment was relieved in the Groesbeek area on the 24th of September, 1944, and moved to Nijmegen. Here they assumed the responsibility of protecting both bridges over the Waal river and protecting the north bank bridgehead. Although under constant shelling and repeated enemy air attacks, the enemy was unable to regain the vital crossing.

## Division Artillery makes history in Holland on D-Day

The 82d A/B "All-American" Division Artillery made airborne history on September 17-18, when the gunners dropped by parachute and landed by glider near Nijmegen, Holland, on D and D plus 1-Day, successfully getting 41 of their 48 howitzers into action. Leading the way, the 376th Parachute F. A. Battalion dropped howitzers on the tail of the parachute infantry, having its first piece assembled and ready to fire in twenty minutes after the green light. Eight howitzers were in position and firing four hours after the drop, the other four having been lost during the flight or damaged in the drop. The battalion supported the attack on Groesbeek on D-Day, and covered the glider landing fields on D plus one, one battery being moved by hand 1000 yards and another over two miles to accomplish their missions. Elements of the Division Artillery Headquarters, the 319th Glider F. A. Battalion, the 320th Glider F.A. Battalion, and the 456th Parachute F.A. Battalion, under the direction of Colonel Francis A. March, Division Artillery Commander, also came in by parachute and glider on D-Day, the remainder landing by glider on D plus 1. By the afternoon of D plus one, the forty-one howitzers had been recovered and were in position supporting the infantry. It was several days before loads, landed in German territory and pinned down by hostile fire, could fight their way to our lines, but fight they did, to join their batteries and assist in pumping thousands of high explosive shells back at the surprised Germans.

With the division entirely surrounded by German troops, the 376th Parachute Battalion set up a perimeter front of 360 degrees, which was strengthened on D plus 1 by the arrival of the 319th, 320th and 456th. Moving from position to position, as the infantry moved to capture bridges, towns, and controlling heights, continuous artillery support was provided for every mission. With little or no sleep during the first 72 hours of action, the gunners brought in ammunition from parachute containers, and gliders, only to fire it as fast as possible as the Germans attacked our front. Due to their tireless efforts and alertness several counter attacks were stopped before they reached the outpost lines. The veterans of Sicily, Maiori, Volturno, Anzio, and Normandy, accustommed to arriving in battle with only the clothing on their back, and the necessity of hauling howitzers and ammunition into position by hand, only worked harder, as they fulfilled a long awaited desire to see their shells leave for Germany. It was only with the arrival of the British armor and artillery from the South that they permitted themselves to rest.

As is usual with artillery, observation and communications were a problem. However, heroic action by forward observers, radio operators, telephone operators and linemen kept our communications in almost continual operation. In many cases, forward observers with their parties were actually surrounded in their positions, but continued to adjust the artillery fire on the Germans. Wires

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# 508 FINISHES 3 WEEKS OF INTENSIVE FIGHTING

## 325 in third campaign

By J. C. Reynolds

The story of the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, during a day and a night of the battle of Mook, Holland, 1st to 3rd Oct. 1944

I knew that the village was on the other side of the hill. I stopped before I reached the top. Behind me lay the green forests of Holland. Everything was quiet and in peace down there, and the droplets of rain shone like diamonds as they gaily danced from the pine trees to the ground. The sun was well up and busy at work taking the chill from the earth. Yes, today was a wonderful day . . . back there. I turned and walked on down the other side.

Mook lay before me. Mook, small Dutch canal town. Mook, last night's battle ground from which the Germans had retreated and through which our troops had advanced. Yes, Mook literally lay there. I felt like a ghost walking his lonely tour through a town without a single person, a town of broken glass, bricks, and smouldering ruins.

I saw an American soldier disappear around a deserted wrecked tank. I followed and called to him. When he stopped, I saw the white brassard with the red cross on his leftarm. We talked as we went towards his Batallion Medical Station. It was located in the ruins of a small Dutch house. The front rooms were in darkness. I became conscious of faces peering from the depths of those rooms . . . the resting wounded awaiting evacuation to the hospital. The two medical officers were in the attached stable in the rear, treating recent patients and simultaneously directing the arrangements of litters and decrepid furniture. There were no wasted movements or moments here. With tired eyes and drawn faces, the medics effortlessly treated the wounded, made hurried reports, unpacked medical supplies and carried litters. The medical officer told me that these litter squads had gone five days without rest. I passed through the hall and out on to the street.

### BETWEEN THE FORESTS THEY FOUGHT.

The front lines were straight ahead, just beyond the village and across the field. I stopped by a Batallion Command Post. Here I learned that nature had been playing a trick on our men, a trick that Jerry was fully aware of and prepared to play along with. Low dense fog, behind which our men advanced, stealthily moved across the open ground. Suddenly, as though swept away by a huge hand, the fog lifted within fire distance and the troops lay startlingly exposed to the enemy. The Company on the flank bore the brunt of this weather phenomenon, as the handful of men still alive could attest to.

We were to attack in a couple of hours. Along a dirt road leading to the canal, I passed handfulls of our resting troops. Beards were heavy and faces dirty behind final smokes. „I've lived about seven lives since morning," said a powerfully-built buck sergeant as he struck a match.

I was met by lonely scarred men, almost childlike in expression, with great effort stumbling to the medical stations in the rear.

I came to a ruined church, scaled the wall and crept out to the moss-covered banks of the canal. I threw a match into the water. It glided softly away. No, there was nothing disrupting these waters. They were peaceful enough to be those in a Biblical setting, flowing gently, oblivious to what was occurring beyond its banks. I took an apple from my pocket which I had picked up along the road. I thought of the church on my left, of the way it could have looked, of the people that once went there. The rumble of guns in the distance continued. I had a strange shivering sensation as I took a final look from the church wall at the calm waters of the canal.

Attack ready! I was just in time. Several British tanks stood along the road with engines idling like a far distant thunder storm. A column of men silently moved along a hedgerow to the road and climbed on the rear of the armored giants. One of the young soldiers determinedly took his place aloft the front of the first tank. He swung one arm over the barrel of the menacingly protruding cannon. His other arm adjusted his rifle partly across his body. I stood for a moment fascinated by the boy's face. Strong features, determined, with quiet brown eyes. The other companies poured from the seemingly inexhaustible hedgerow. Bearded faces looked up, broke into smiles and spoke friendly jibes at the youth on the first tank. It worked, for a slow smile appeared on his face and developed into a grin. He was still grinning as the steel tanks rolled forward.

### „GENERAL JIM'S HERE"

I fell in with the forward moving dispersed column. A tall, lonely figure in paratrooper uniform appeared as though by magic. He had the large, ever present rifle slung diagonally across his back. His stride was long, silent and confident. „General Jim's here," was passed up along the column. What a feeling of pride those words caused.

Silence, broken only by the murmur of the creeping tanks. The column advanced, twisting and winding close to the hedgerows. The canal came into sight again. I didn't care to look. Halt signal. We squatted low to the ground. „Move across to the trench." I turned and joined the others as they dashed toward the enemy built trench along the banks of the canal. Silence. We moved back to the road. A little firing started further forward. I saw one boy from the unit in the rear make a lightning dash for the trench we had just left. I watched him as he disappeared over the side. I didn't have time to look away before I was startled by a terrific explosion and the sight of that boy flying out of the trench as though seized by powerful hands and tossed up onto the ground. He lay motionless in the midst of the clearing smoke. In search of protection he had chosen the one spot in a hundred yards where a mine had been carefully placed.

Still forward. Then it came! All hell broke loose. The air screamed with death tokens. Clods of dirt and moss flew as though taking sides in the battle. Sand rained as the shells hit. Machine guns tic-tacked as though attempting to put continuity to both sound and mistles. My head started to pound as though it was a huge anvil continually swelling under the powerful blows of a mighty hammer.

They had said that our enemy down there was third rate. He was old or diseased. They must have pulled a fast switch, then, because he sure looked young and healthy to me as he was hauled out and taken prisoner. Put up one hell of a fight along with it.

### THEY HAD BEATEN THE ENEMY.

I moved along the canal where I could see the effects of our artillery. Our men had advanced and had the objective. It was now a question of holding it. Things quieted down and I went back to the village. Some English boys were having tea beside their tank which they had just brought back out. They swore by our men up there. „Great in battle," they said, „with plenty of guts . . . and it takes plenty to do what they've done."

Night was closing in. With the darkness came silence, expectant waiting and fatigue. I returned to the church yard and, propped against the wall, waited. I thought of the men I had seen, of the things they had done in battle beating the enemy back; of heroism and death working so closely together; of the chaplain I had talked to who „was more convinced of a Divine Being than ever before."

I returned to the lines. At dawn, things quieted down again. A terrific bombardment had been the prelude to the resuming of the battle. Ambulances and jeeps were speeding along the roads evacuating the wounded. The medics were working at a feverish pace. I turned and walked from Mook, back up the hill. I was nearly to the top again. I turned and looked back. There was Mook as I had first seen it. There was the canal flowing as always. Beyond the city were the valiant men of that heroic 325th Glider Regiment. They had fought hard, lost many, but gained their objective. They were weary and exhausted, but were victorious. They had beaten the enemy and accomplished their mission.

I turned and walked on. In the distance I saw two long columns of men moving toward me. I smiled as I knew the men back there would when they saw the reinforcements and relief coming up. Soon there would be a chance for them to rest, to rest without having to be alert for the enemy, to rest from many days of fighting, blood and death. Before me „lay the green forests of Holland, where everything was in peace, and the droplets of rain shone like diamonds as they gaily danced from the pine trees to the ground."

## DOBERMAN PINCHED BY MPS

### DOG SPY ESCAPES FOLD OF PROVOST-MARSHAL OR PANZER PLUTO PLAYS POSSUM AFTER M.P.'S PINCH PINSCHER

The MP's of the 82nd Airborne Division M.P. Platoon dropped their military dignity long enough to pinch a Doberman-Pinscher from the Division Defense Platoon. The German born, bred, and trained dog turned tail on his former lord and masters and took up office hours beneath the Provost Marshal's desk.

In hopes of grooming a real blood hound, the MP's really thought they had something when they saw „Deutchee" drop tail and take for a fox-hole when the Luftwaffe soared over that night. Excitement reached a really alarming peek, however, when the brown beast, after a terrific warm up dash, took a flying leap at an unconcerned passing Allied motorcyclist. What a splash!

„Deutchee" turned Mata-Hari a few nights ago during an enemy artillery barrage, and for all we know she's back with the Schiklegruber boys.

## 508 BEARING BRUNT ON WIDE DEFENSE SECTOR. IST TO ENTER GERMANY

The air over the DZ was filled with flak but no other gunfire was heard as our 1st and 2nd Battalions reached the ground and began to assemble. The 3rd Battalion, jumping near the edge of the DZ came down squarely upon a 20 mm. anti-aircraft position. The crew fled in panic and joined a small party of die-hard enemy firing from the edge of the area. These were driven off and the assembly completed. The battalions moved out to their objectives.

Companies A and B immediately moved into the town of Nijmegen to secure the bridge spanning the Waal River. Fighting their way through strange city streets on an dark night, both companies reached the center of the city where German resistance stiffened and mounting counter-attacks made the night an ogre's ordeal. One platoon of Company A pushed ahead and reached the southern approach to the Nijmegen bridge. Here this patrol managed to knock out a building which was believed to house the controls for the destruction of the bridge by enemy demolitions. Forced by heavy shellfire to withdraw, the patrol was unable to make contact with the company and so for three nights remained in the city. A British tank column moving in was stopped by enemy obstacles. Elements of Company A joined the British and spearheaded them through the streets toward the bridge which was later gained intact. On the 18th, Company B had been forced to fall back when enemy artillery registered on their position and the buildings surrounding were set afire. Later, Company B moved to Wyler where, all day, the men fought off a battalion of German SS troops. Before nightfall they pulled back to another position and set up an iron-clad „keep out", „verboten to S.S. defense".

Company C meanwhile did their job to perfection fighting a spectacular battle for Hill 97.5 after three previous attempts by other units had failed to wrest it from the Germans. This Company launched an attack which carried the hill and then withstood six successive counter-assaults by heavy artillery, mortars and twice their number of infantry. When ammunition was down to five rounds per man, the defenders defiantly rejected a German proposal of surrender and, though cut off from the main body, held out until relieved five days later.

During this action, the 508 2nd Battalion had skirted the city and moved toward the Maas-Waal Canal Bridge, encountering machine guns and 20 mm cannon en route. Lt. Lloyd G. Polette, leading the point, personally destroyed one 20 mm gun and a machine gun position. Next day his platoon of 20 men stormed the bridge after a bloody fight and secured that crossing.

This same day, German troops overran the DZ and portions of the 1st and 2nd Battalion, returned to clear that area, just a few minutes before scheduled glider landings. The 2nd Battalion remained to secure the zone from further attacks.

### FIRST TO CROSS GERMAN BORDER.

The 3rd Battalion, moving out after assembly on the 17th, fought a bitter action for Berg-en-Dal and its important road junction. On the 18th, Company H pushed down to Beek and struck three times in one night before tearing the enemy hold from that point. Company H was the first airborne unit to push the German frontier and hold. Company G, battled through the eastern section of Nijmegen and fought tenaciously for the Waal (Rhine) River bridge until heavy artillery and mortar bombardment which they could not combat caused their withdrawal. Company I swung out into the flats east of Beek and destroyed enemy strong points. The battalion then attacked with British tanks and pushed its lines east to include the open ground before Beek.

All battalions were relieved and pulled back to reorganize and gain a short breather. The regiment moved up again held a sector of the Division MLR which the enemy blasted with heavy guns and continually attacked but could never penetrate.

## „Market" Day

### The spirit behind the 82ND Division

Often overlooked in the history of any operation is D-day minus one, that last day of waiting and wondering when preparations are completed after days of constant alert, and the soldier suddenly finds himself all packed and ready. For what?

Especially in an airborne operation where weather may suddenly change the date of departure, this period of last minute waiting may continue for days, each day bringing the tension of departure, followed by the let-down of another delay.

The Dutch Airborne invasion came off as planned. The Division left its base in England for several different airports on September 15. Some still thought it would be a dry-run, but nobody knew. This looked like the real thing to most, and regardless, every man knew he must be ready. There is no second guessing in combat.

The 16th brought the briefing. It was definitely to be Holland. A pure airborne show to seize the bridges and clear the trail for the British 2nd Army's armored advance into Holland. What would we meet? Nobody knew. On the northern flank of the Siegfried Line we, of the 82nd, were to land by parachute and glider. Through three successive invasions we had conquered the foe and liberated the friend. But this was a new kind of mission. Jumping in front of the British 2nd Army, we were to clear a vast area near the German border, seize and hold all key bridges, and wait until the British 2nd Army passed through. Flanked by the German Reichwald, a reported German Tiger tank park, the men knew not what to expect. It could be a „milk-run" or it could be the bloodiest fight to date.

Re-supply and reinforcements like the initial assault would have to be entirely airborne. There were no sea lanes or ground approaches either close or open. Airborne meant weather. Would it rain or would the sun stay with us?

These were the questions that raced through each and every jumper or glider-man's brain.

Heavy flak, a long overland route, air support and protection, flimsy gliders, no sealed-in gas tanks on the C-47's, sweating out the jump, glider crashes, machine-gun fire, hedgerows, landing obstacles, and a million other thoughts, past experiences and hearsay crowded the GI craniums. Land, run like hell for the nearest ditch, fire back, then what?

These were the thoughts in every man's mind. They had been through everything and always victorious. Why? General „Jim" says, „It's the quality of the troops," and the troops say, „It's the leaders like General „Jim". What it is we don't know, but at any rate here was another mission to sweat out.

Anxious waiting, last-minute instructions, a review of the plans, a wet brow and over-anticipation? Oh, No!!! Not the 82nd.

A swing concert, a movie, a football game and a wrestling match. And those that didn't like any of these just slept through it all. Was this the day before they were to face possible death? It was amazing.

At all of the airports, the men slept in huge hangers. Into each, on schedule, went one of the two great Division swing bands. The bandsmen must stay back and do every imaginable kind of disagreeable rear echelon job when the Division goes to combat, but the men respect these musicians. Better than that, they take great pride in them, because these jumping swingsters have not only qualified for their parachutists' wings but have produced a quality of swing which is top professional-plus. This is their job.

Filing in from one of the other airports came a Division band under the direction of Sgt. Woods, its tallented conductor. Placing their cardboard music stands on the cement hanger floor, the men hurriedly shuffled through the sheet music and struck out with „American Patrol." 600 men hit the deck in unison. The cots were empty. In the accustical splendor of the metal hanger shell the swing was resplendent. Feet were stamping and arms were flailing as tune after tune rebounded off the soundboards of the hanger walls. Hundreds surged around the bandstand to sing, whistle and clap to a trumpet ride or a drum break. This was it! Terrific music and, what is more important, it caught the spirit of the men. Rookies, like myself, buried in shame any doubts they had about the morrow and swelled with pride to the tunes of their fine band and the spirit of their fine Division.

No longer worried about anything and with the attitude of an „All American" soldier for the first time, I turned around to see if it had affected others the same way. There they were. Six GI's playing pepper with a brand new softball; two sergeants blowing up a football for a little game of pass; a corporal trading socks with his squad to the beat of the music. Some still snored away oblivious to worry of any kind, but by in all, the majority swung with the music.

Neither were these men all „jive." Just as inspiring to most were the sentimental, almost nostalgic, „I'll Get By" and „I'll Be Seeing You In All The Old Familiar Places." These men were sentimental as well as reckless and heroic. Behind these diversified characteristics was the real man, the serious soldier.

If I had to pick one man in that crowd to exemplify the spirit of the 82nd soldier, I believe I should choose a lone private over on his bed whistling madly, and sharpening the eight-inch blade of his trench knife on his rifle strap to the rhythm of a trumpet solo on the „All-American Soldier". This was, and is, the spirit of this 82nd All-American Airborne Division, the pre-invasion jitters that every soldier is supposed to get. If there were any butterflys in these stomachs, they were jumping to that music.

So was the spirit of the average 82nd Airborne soldier when he boarded his glider or plane for „Market Day," D-Day of the operation market, the invasion of German-occupied Holland. This had also been the spirit, the glorious victorious spirit, that won so valiantly in Sicily, Salerno, Anzio, and Normandy.

EIGHTY SECOND AIRBORNE DIVISION

# D DAY

SEPTEMBER 17TH

## WITH THE 82ND AIRBORNE
## *by parachute*

By David H. Whittier With 82nd.

PARATROOPS IN HOLLAND. — In bright sunlight today from a clear blue sky thousands of red, white, blue, green and camouflaged parachutes settled into the Dutch countryside as American paratroops descended and secured their immediate objectives in the path of a retreating German army.

Veteran American paratroopers who ate a combined breakfast-dinner of sausage, cereal, French toast, tomato juice, coffee and fried chicken in England, three hours later were drinking milk and munching hard-boiled eggs in Holland proffered by an overjoyed civilian populace.

Sitting packed in rolling, pitching C-47s, bodies constricted within a mass of cumbersome equipment, the paratroopers roared over England's undulating countryside and fought off the nausea of air sickness accentuated by an irrepressible excitement.

The jumpmaster of our ship, hovered around the open door in a manner that didn't ease the turbulence in my stomach. Always a sufferer from acrophobia, my insides writhed as I watched him moving around half in and half out of the door with nothing more than gravity and a sense of balance holding him to the floor of the ship.

After about an hour we came over the Dutch coast, part of the area flooded by the Germans, and now only distinguishable from the sea by scattered red rooftops and strips of high ground. A Flying Fort lumbered along on our right looking very powerful and protective as the sun glinted along its sleek silvery fusilage. Fighters would occasionally slip into view as they weaved above us.

Speeding inland, we became possessed of mixed feelings—below us Dutch people stood by their little red houses in their green fields and waved handkerchiefs to us; around us black puffs of ack ack blossomed in the sky. One plane ahead began disgorging paratroopers. A moment after the last man jumped, the ship swerved and plunged to the ground where it burst into a ball of orange flame and black smoke. We gulped and then watched three fighters go into a perpendicular dive over what was apparently an anti-aircraft position.

The crew chief of our plane, a fellow who divided his time between sleeping on the floor and rearranging the buckets interspersed at regular intervals along the length of the plane for the purpose of catching what some men couldn't hold, began hurriedly to don his flak suit. The flak suit ressembled a baseball catcher's chest protector except that it covered part of the back as well as the front. „What about your behind?" or words to that effect shouted a witty private, veteran of the Sicilian and Italian invasions.

„Oh, that—the air corps says it's expendable," bellowed the air chief.

The man who sat opposite me had been reading WESTERN MAGAZINE all the way. How he could sit there calmly immersed in a pulp magazine at a time like that, I'll never know. Most of us were half sick, terribly uncomfortable and scared. Our mission was a tough one—the objectives had to be taken at all costs and from advance intelligence reports the objectives would be exceedingly well defended. There was plenty to be anxious about. There always is in this sort of an operation and we were sweating.

Then we arrived over the river. It looked much bigger than it had on the map and it seemed to wind all over the countryside. We'd get the order to „Stand up and hook up" any second now. I thought about my Mae West buried someplace under my equipment. I'd never be able to get at it if we landed in the river—with this equipment on I'd sink like a stone. I tried not to think about anything and grabbed my rifle tighter and waited.

„Stand up and hook up," shouted the jumpmaster. We struggled to our feet, snapped our static lines to the anchor line that ran along the reef of the ship, grabbed our weapons still more tightly and waited.

Our ship was a C-53, which is exactly the same as a C-47 except that it is not equipped to carry cargo and therefore has a much smaller exit door. I'm over six feet and, as we stood under the anchor line, I worried about getting out of the door. Is it not easy for a man six feet two inches tall to jump through a door four and one half feet by two and one half feet wide under any circumstances. When he is leaded down with a pistol, rifle, bandoliers of ammunition, a pack, a bed roll, a dispatch case, gas mask, Mae West, two parachutes and sundry other minor items—brother, he's got something on, and a C-53 door looks like a chink of daylight.

The „Jumpy" shouted „Go." Immediately, all thoughts of Germans, flak, upset stomach, rivers and C-53 doors flitted from my mind. I was number fourteen man and I could see the rear ends of the men in front of me as they turned into the door. I could hear the prop blast catch each chute and „plop" it.

There was a great rush of air and a tremendous "wham" as my chute burst open. All the world seemed suddenly quiet — as in a dream. There was still the roar of engines, but it sounded far away. I got a glimpse of vari-colored chutes around me and on the ground I could see more chutes of all colors; the red ones looking like puddles of blood.

I slung my rifle over my arm and reached up to grasp the risers in order to slip into a plowed field where I could see other paratroopers running around, but I couldn't make it as the wind was too strong and blew me into a strip of trees bordering the field. I crossed my arms in front of my face, crossed my legs and crashed through the trees to the ground.

A fellow rushed up and started to help me out of my harness. „Where are we?" I asked.

„In a turnip patch," he said.

„I thought we were in Holland," I replied strickenly. That's how excited I was.

## WITH THE 82ND AIRBORNE
## *by glider*

COMING IN WITH A GLIDE AND A GULP.....

By Wm. F. Dawson.

On the 17th, we were ready to go. This was it. The weather was perfect and, unlike our proposed Belgium landing, the British 2nd Army was not moving too fast to make our operation feasible.

The gliders were stacked up end-to-end on the cement runways, and along side of them on the grass were the big C-47 Dakota—two planes modeled after our Douglas airliners. Some of the C-47's had been on four parachute hops and all were huge grizzled veterans compared to the tiny CG-4a American gliders that make but one trip (if you're lucky). Tension was not great as we piled our stuff aboard the glider. Our pilot had been in on Normandy and again in Southern France. He was cool, and inspired confidence through his capabilities.

On the front of the glider, already named „Betty" by the pilot's friends, went Bette Oswald's picture, the first pin-up to go into an invasion guiding a glider of fourteen men. What a destiny for a snapshot!

Then the moment came! Amid the deafening roar of the huge twin-motored transports, we saw the grass curl backward and lie flat from the prop blast as the plane and glider team in front of us took off down the runway.

„Hook your safety belts, the Nylon tow line is fastened, they're taking up the slack . . . hold on!" Then with a lurch the tail comes up, the nose goes down, the plywood creeks, and we are barreling down the runway. Long before the tow plane leaves the ground the speed sends the flimsy glider skyward. Then the C-47 comes up under us and we're off for the rendezvous area. Gliders ride higher than their tow planes, and we can see the sky full of planes and gliders, including our own tow plane below us, roaring out to get into our respective position in the four column line.

First, over the English countryside with its tiny checker box fields, and then out toward blitz Creek (The North Sea.) Some of us would never see England again. We all had a lot of thinking to do. A thousand times we'd been over the plan of that to do, when, and where. Would this be a milk-run, a suicide, or neither? Once the initial take-off and thinking spell were over, we settled back for a 275 mile, three hour journey. Some combat veterans actually went to sleep, while others read, thought, prayed and watched the scenery. I just got sick. After the first fifteen minutes, I had already been sick for thirteen. Flashing my hash was but a momentary pleasure among the agonizing minutes between flashes. Seventeen times I tried to throw up the lining of my gizzard and sixteen times it said, „NO, I like it here!" But enough of the pains and displeasures of one airsick rookie.

Out over the North Sea we could see a steady stream of traffic all around us and an occasional Corvette cutting the water below. Thunderbolt fighters would flash momentarily in the sun above us while groups of six C-47's, without their glider cargo, would flash paratroopers by as they caught up and crossed our path at an angle from some other English field. To our left and above a stream of British Horsar (Flying Boxcar) gliders with their Lancaster bomber tow planes. This was „it," the biggest air show on earth . . . from the air.

„Wow!" said one of our Ohio soldiers, „what Cleveland wouldn't give for this air show." Below us were the shadows of the huge planes and glid... on the water which in itself appeared a sparkli... contour map of blues and light greens, where the bottom waxed alternately shallow and deep in distinct but irregular patterns.

On and on they went, streams of gliders joining in a roaring current from the smaller flow out of several English airdromes. Huge, four-engined Forts, their silver bodies and high tails shining, would cross overhead on their way to pulvarize Germany. And always the Spitfires, Thunderbolts, and Mustangs, so small yet so deadly, darting under, over, criss-crossing through the otherwise helpless air convoy they were protecting.

Occasionally a glider or a tow plane struck by flak or mechanical difficulties would be seen in the sea. I spotted two Horsars, one C-47, and one American CG-4a, which is a remarkably small percentage when you consider we were in on the greatest air invasion to date. On the wing of the American glider stood two lone figures. „Were the others drowned or was it a cargo glider with only two aboard?" That we found out later. No lives lost. One of those two tiny specks on the glider wing in blitz creek returned to us on a later and more successful flight.

As we roar over „flak island," that big mass of land in the Zuider Zee, the smoke puffs that denote ack-ack start to rise, but always the fighter planes harassing their accuracy. One burning C-47 is seen crashed in a field, but the chutes on the ground indicate all the paratroopers and crew had bailed out in time.

Most of Zeeland had been flooded in an earlier attempt by our Air Corps to bomb the dikes and keep the Germans bottled up. On one high spot stood a Dutch house, three trees and a glider which had made a perfect forced landing on the only available ground.

As we made our air trek inland, the flak grew heavier and the land grew drier. In between watching flak bursts, we could see the Dutch people in their Sunday goin' ta meetin' clothes out in the streets of their villages and hamlets waving us on joyously with both arms. For them, after 5 years, it must have been a truely astonishing and inspiring sight. Soon we saw some of the parachute planes coming back on the sky road to England. They gave us the „W.C. Fields" nose light greeting and sped onward in their closer and speedier formation. For them, it was the last lap of a run well won, for us, a reassurance for the tense climax ahead.

Continued Pag. 4

# D + ONE *looking up*

GELDERLAND GLIDERLAND.

It was D plus 1. Most of the artillery, many smaller units, and a complete re-supply by air were to be the attractions. Unlike all previous airborne invasions, this one had to be complete. No artillery piece, no matter how heavy, no re-supply no matter how essential, could be brought by sea; the 82nd airborne formed an inaccessible pocket of resistance far from any allied sea or land supply.

It was a beautiful autumn day and visibility was perfect. When they started to come in, hundreds of Dutchmen, like myself, were standing along-side their houses, looking skyward at the spectacle. I tried to imagine the thrill it must be for these liberated people.

Hundreds of gliders coming in with their tow planes, a stream that funneled out of the horizon widening with each mile nearer the eye. The pilots had been trained to cut loose at 800 feet, but in a lift so large, they had to come in at all altitudes to facilitate a speedy surprise and still avoid collision. Cutting loose at various altitudes, the gliders would turn left at a hundred different angles while the Dakota tow planes turned up and away to the right, tightening their formation and quickening their speed for the dash home.

There it was, a cloudless sky covered in heighth and depth with gliders, cutting loose, soaring, turning, diving, and landing. All in a continuous moving panorama.

Landing, that tense moment when you either make it or you don't, and then .... what will greet you when you leap from the soreplane? Some land on grass, others in a cloud of dust on freshly plowed fields .... some come straight at a tree, a house, or a hill. Will they clear it? Some don't, but most of them do, somehow lifting suddenly, almost miraculously and then pointing down for a landing.

What kind of a landing, I asked myself, as the men in each glider must have been asking? . . . There were many .... Some nosed down to grind to a hairpin stop in a small area, others glided along a grassy pasture stirring up a little puff of dust, a divit of turf and then coming to an easy stop .... Elsewhere the fields were plowed and a cloud of dust and dirt would clear to alleviate the suspense of the onlooker with a perfect landing. Others, not so lucky, might hit a truck, garden or a sugar beet field that appeared green from the air and then suddenly loomed up as a loosely plowed, uneven, rough spot, a sudden rise or depression in the ground, or two trees not quite far enough apart .... Many nose over in a cloud of flying dirt and their heavy jeep, trailer, or artillery piece tears loose in the crash to plow through the side of the flimsy gliders. One glider comes in at a 45° angle scraping the tip of one wing until it catches and turns the plane and its cargo in a somersault of twisted wreckage. The fusilage is twisted like a bar rag being rung out, after a spilled fish bowl schooner .... cases of artillery ammunition are strewn over the ground for twenty yards in the furrow the glider had cut.

Yet, when we fought our way through the choking dust cloud which engulfed the twisted wreckage, only the pilot of the dazed crew was slightly hurt and the grimey-faced occupants were carrying him to an approaching aid man.

A few crashes tore the heavy jeeps and 105's loose to seriously hurt the less fortunate, but by and all the fortunes of war had been good. The skill and luck of most landings were exceptional. The largest mass glider landing in history was a huge success. Fields for miles around were covered with the flimsy motorless CG4a's. A Dutchman would look out the window of his little house one minute to see planes overhead and return a minute later to find a glider sprawled in his turnip patch.

RESUPPLY BY BOMBER.

Then came the bombers. Re-supply by air. Huge four motored Liberators loaded with supplies instead of block busters.

At tree-top level, the silver giants with the multi-colored names and mascots painted on their sides leisurely buzzed the men below as they confidently roared past. These flying arsenals feared not the scarce and scattered ack-ack which the Paratroopers had been „working-over" from the ground for twenty-four hours. Colored nylon chutes—blue, orange, and white—float down with the much-needed food and ammunition bundles tied on. Colapsing on the ground like huge mushrooms in technicolor, these parachutes, along with those of the day before and the abundance of gliders, literally blanketed the fields that two days before housed a cow, a horse, or a pig, now too bewildered to leave the sanctity of their barn.

Still further above the gliders, tow, planes, and bombers, darted the always present fighters. Silver streaks, the greyhound watch-dogs of the sky, keeping the Luftwaffe at a safe distance. A glittering stary umbrella, a milky-way of protection, a mile above the gliders.

Light flashes, puffs of smoke and the boom-boom of German ack-ack in the distance, all added a touch of realism to the serenity of the scene. Much of the tension felt in the air the day before was lost when watching from the safety on the ground. The huge over-all panorama of a thousand things, the over-all coordination of this stupendous air show almost obscured the tense realism of the job being done by the sky armada we were watching.

One Lib. limped over with only three motors „conking on all fours" as a grim reminder that all was not peace and quiet. „Jerry" artillery booming throughout the landings found the range toward the end, and blasted a few gliders in the field before their crews could unload them. The artillery lost appoximately one third of their tow jeeps.

Two C-47's conked out from flak and went down in flames over Germany, when one group of planes misjudged the landing zone and took their gliders east of the Reichwald. Most of these men fought their way back during the next three days, but such a grim accident, and terrible crashes are a part of every airborne operation. We all know and realize it. They are to be reckoned with and prevented if possible, but in an operation which was so close to perfection there is no place for criticism of a few unavoidable errors. Many crashed in Germany, most returned safely, but by and all the operation was perfection in performance and the landings were picturebook in their excellence.

The new Airborne Army can well be proud of the skill, co-operation and co-ordination which so successfully pulled off this largest of all airborne operations in history. Landing casualties were light. Efficiency, planning, and surprise were terrific. The largest operation to date was a tremendous success.

engineer bn. does superior job in Holland

Engineers of the 307th Engineer Battalion distinguished themselves in one of the most important and hazardous assaults in the Nijmegen sector—a thrust which put two battalions of infantry over the Waal River west of the Nijmegen under artillery, mortar and small arms fire.

The engineers crossed the river under direct enemy observation in canvas boats; crossed and recrossed despite loss of more than half of their craft.

Twenty-six boats moved over the river in the first wave and only 11 were in condition for the return trip. Despite the small number of serviceable boats, the engineers paddled from bank to bank until the entire infantry force was committed.

In addition to assembling, launching and propelling the assault boats, those whose boats were disabled joined the assaulting forces in their successful battle for the highly important Nijmegen bridges.

The engineers have done a creditable job throughout the campaign, aiding in infantry fighting, establishing road blocks, removing mines and bridge demolitions and acting as security troops for the division command post.

„The Gelderlander Press, having been forbidden by the enemy, rejoices to be free again by the glorious landing of the ALLIED LIBERATORS near Nijmegen. Praying God he may bless America's President, FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, the British Empire's King GEORGE VI, and the VALIANT PEOPLE they may soon lead our common weapons to complete victory.

G. H. J. B. BODEWES
Director
„Gelderlander Press".

CENSORED BY

Printed material censored for publication SHAEF censor 121
10 Oct. 1944

Pvt. Wm. Dawson
08711

Pvt. Wm. Dawson
Btry B. 456. Prc. Hvy. AA Bn.
APO 469 c/o POSTMASTER
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

POSTMASTER
NEW YORK N.Y.
OCT 15
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THIS SPACE IS FOR YOUR PERSONAL LETTER

WHEN COMPLETED FOLD ONCE AND STAPLE OR TAPE. NO ENVELOPE NECESSARY.

Dear Ma + Pa + George.

a few words to let you know that everything is o.k. with me down here. I hope everything is the same with you all. I am sending you a copy of the 82nd to give you a idea of what we have been doing

Your Loving Son Bernard

## Division Artillery makes history in Holland on D-Day

Continued from pag. 1

shot out were repaired instantly, with wire-men going without relief to see that their beloved wires were kept operating. An outstanding feature of the capture of the Nijmegen bridge was the communications carried across the Waal river by 376th radio and telephone operaters in the face of terrific hostile fire, enabling the battalion to provide close direct support throughout the heroic engagement. The artillery air OP's, arriving on D plus 3, have been a thorn in the side of German operations since their arrival, cracking down accurate fire on mortars, Nebelwerfers, or batteries as they appear. With two of their cubs attacked by German fighters, the air pilots and observers jauntily continue their flights as if there was no opposition, keeping Jerry under cover throughout the day.

With the arrival of the British ground troops, our artillery was augmented by Field and Medium regiments, which permitted long awaited counter-battery action. Supporting our fire with a constant stream of different regiments as the action passed North across the Nijmegen Bridge, division artillery headquarters was confronted with a nice problem of coordinating the American and British fire. Their success has been acknowledged by the commendation of the Allied Airborne Commander, Lieutenant General F. A. M. Browning, CB, DSO.

In a more static position, the gunners have now dug themselves in, and have set up house-keeping — underground style. The experience of the 376th Parachute Battalion during its fifty-nine days on the Anzio beach head has been invaluable, some of the gunners having provided themselves with the luxury of rooms with six feet of solid earth over their heads, complete with lights and toilet facilities. The sergeant-major has even provided a visiting room for first-sergeants, suitable for any first-class mine. It will be very hard to break the composure of the artillerymen as they contentedly drop shells on any Jerry that shows his head. Assured by their supported infantry that they are doing a fine job, the gunners are very happy.

# „A Rookie's reception"

By Wm. F. Dawson

(September 30, Delayed—with the 82nd „All-American" Airborne Division, NIJMEGEN, HOLLAND.)

„The war is almost over. The Germans are all old men and young children. They haven't any gasoline — their ammunition is very scarce".

So reads, preaches and believes Mr. and Mrs. Optimistic America and, perhaps with some truth, but let's talk to anyone of these doughboys fighting on the Dutch-German border. They are rugged paratroopers, the same American Division that spearheaded assaults into Sicily, Italy, Normandy, and now the Netherlands. Every day some of them are being killed by the same Krauts who are „too old to fight," too low on morale to fight, too low on gasoline to fight, too scarce of ammunition to fight, etc.

One thing seems to be forgotten. If there is only one round of ammunition left and only one 65 year old German to fire it, the war is still very, very real to the American boy at the other end of that enemy's rifle barrel. Until the last shot is fired the war will be very much real to the boys doing the fighting.

Last night I slept with the men of the 82nd Airborne Division. They had been through Sicily, Italy and Normandy before Holland. These men were veterans. What few were left from the Sicilian campaign had been through more than most of us would believe possible. War never was and never will be „old stuff" to these men. They are experienced, yes, but never bored; not in this business.

We were tired and slept soundly until 10:00 o'clock, 11:00 o'clock,, 12:00 o'clock, then it came — a terrific explosion! We awoke with a start. All night the British had been firing their huge earth-quaking Long Toms from around us and we slept on, but this was different! Any man who had ever been under artillery fire knew it. That last shell was not going in the other direction. Maybe it was a stray? But, no, we were not destined to be so fortunate. The long sputtering whistle, the deafening crash and flying shrapnel, twigs, dirt, everything in the path of the plumeting steel segments begins to rain down on you.

Almost mechanically, the men were out of their sacks and into the nearest hole or depression available. I was a visitor, but hosts have no time for visitors during artillery bombardments. The fox-holes were full of GI flesh, so a quick dive brought me face to face with yesterday's lunch. I'd picked the garbage pit. Cringing, huddled amongst the rotting scrapings of the GI mess kits, I bent myself double against the sides of the broken-down hole and prayed like I've never prayed before.

For two hours I shivered with fright and cold as, one after another, the shells whistled and flashed in a crescendo of ear-shattering concussion and body-shattering steel.

They were coming in fours and fives. I began to know when I heard one that three or four more were certain to follow. And then, with the fifth one, the ever present hope and prayer, the „Oh Dear God, don't let them send another series".

After a minute's respite, a minute of hope, anxiety, fear, and tension they would start coming again. The plaintive wail of the huge missels plumeting through the air and then the characteristic rush of wind, and the horrible head-splitting explosion.

After two hours it stopped. I had cramps in my legs from the long crouching and huddling into the smallest possible target. My ears buzzed with the dulled senseless hearing from the constant explosion. Neither had mattered before, nor had the headache from the concussion of the earthshaking bursts.

Twenty minutes longer we shook in our holes. The bombardment had been so long, and the terror had struck so deep, that it was hard to believe the quiet was but a lull before another burst of horror.

Finally, the men started popping up again. „How are all your men, Sergeant?" „We lost two jeeps."

„The hell with the jeeps, check that other squad." „That was a close one, Joe." „You ain't kiddin' Bud. That was worse than Anzio and those nights there were no picnic either."

The men were themselves again. Not many felt like sleeping, but they could talk, and joke, and buck each other up as they inspected the area for damage. Finding your buddies safe after such an ordeal is a wonderful feeling. You've come through another together.

In my tent were fourteen shrapnel holes. Our newly acquired writing table had only three legs left, and the upholstered chair we had taken from the Ex-Gestapo Headquarters was nothing but splinters. Bud's mess kit had a big gaping hole in its side. The water can which stood beside my beloved garbage pit showed three yawning holes. One of Joe's tent poles had been cut in two, leaving his tent half colapsed. Nearly every vehicle had gashes or scars. One truck had burned up from the explosion of a direct hit. Others were demolished from shell fragments. Trees were all over the ground. Those still standing had splintery white gashes. Few were left unscarred. Concussion had covered the earth with fresh green leaves shaken from every branch in a premature fall.

A final check showed personnel intact. Not one casualty in the whole area that the Germans had so thoroughly raked and covered with fire.

„Good," you say, „then why write about it"?

I'll tell you why these Airborne soldiers of the 82nd have proven through four campaigns that they are as brave as any group of men in the world. They will face any foe alive with rifle or cold steel. They have killed more Germans, and lost more of their own men than any of us like to think about.

God had answered our prayers that night. None were killed in that particular barrage, but in other barrages, other areas, both in the 82nd and with American boys all over Europe, every one was not so fortunate. The same harrowing, horrifying, terrible explosions were taking lives of brave men huddled in the protection of the ground all over the war-torn world. We cannot begin to completely measure the horrors of war in the number of casualties. Each man must also fight his own private little war. They are still shooting at him. He needs your understanding, help and appreciation. The overall tide of battle has swung our way, but, for the individual, the squad, the Division, still fighting the tenacious German, the war is far from over.

For many, things have brightened and we at the front are glad, but until everyone of our men are safe we want the people to know and FACE the truth. This is no time to count our chickens.

Last night the German was not short on gasoline to haul his big guns to the front. Last night the German was not short on ammunition to kill our troops. Today, Tomorrow, and the next day, will be the same. Do not coast across the finish line. We, on the German border, cannot take it easy, and we need the faith, understanding and cooperation to help us finish the job faster so we too can plan our play for the future.

No matter how old or young the remaining German, he is still strong enough to pull the trigger on his rifle or yank the lanyard on his artillery.

The Luftwaft still flys over night and day to strafe and drop bombs on us. The enemy artillery still pounds us nightly. The machine guns still sputter and spit death. The German fights on.

The boys of the 82nd and the boys at every front want you to know they are winning as they always have, but the price is still great; the German still fights, tenaciously, doggedly, fanatically, and most are neither too young nor too old, but Grade A No. 1 fighters. Each soldier has learned love and respect for his buddies that have fought by his side so valiently for so long and he wants you to know that those who die now are just as heroic, just as dead, and just as worthy of the ideals they died to preserve as those who had life snuffed out farther back along the trail. Don't forget the boys now anymore than you did in Sicily, Italy, Normandy, and any other battle zone where men die that more shall live. They have a fight to finish and so do you. When it is finished is time to relax. Only then let's talk about Germans too old to fight, Germans without planes, trucks, guns, and ammunition. Our soldiers have a great faith in you at home. They'll fight harder and finish sooner if you do not let them get discouraged by your complacency. They are proud and happy that living is better and easier at home than in the countries they liberate. Don't hurt them by taking advantage of their pride. Recognize their fight ahead and help them win it.

## WITH THE 82nd AIRBORNE BIJ GLIDER

*(continued from pag. 3)*

Soon we could see the fields bedecked with their silk mushrooms that spelled „our boys are there." (Unlike most invasions, the gliders and paratroop planes had taken off simultaneously, and it was a short ten minutes between the time the last silk collapsed and the first glider hit the deck.)

When we'd spotted our landing zone the „glider commander co-pilot" (nearly all our regular officers rode co-pilot this trip) from his co-pilot's seat showed the pilot the forest they'd talked so often about landing near.

„Get ready, we're cuttin' loose," shouted the pilot. The Nylon tow rope was released and we banked for an into the wind landing. Speed 140 . . . 120 . . . 90, down we came, 60 miles an hour and nosed into the soft dirt for an unexpectedly quick but perfect stop. „Let's go!" shouted the co-pilot amid a cloud of flying dirt, and simultaneously with the glider stop, we grabbed our rifles, unhooked our safety belts, and piled out the sides of the glider, running pell mell to flop in the nearest ditch. Finding things unbelievably quiet in our sector of the LZ, we returned to get our sleeping bags and haversacks. From other gliders, not so crowded with personnel (we had fourteen men in ours) came jeeps, trailers, and a small number of artillery pieces.

All gliders were not as lucky as ours, for no one expected to find the soft plowed ground which appeared as smooth green fields from above, but, on the whole, crashes were few, and casualties, both glider and parachute, on the first all daylight invasion in the E.T.O., were amazingly light. The 82nd had landed again. In their fourth German-held country, as in Sicily, Italy, and Normandy, they would go on to victory in Holland.